

Relationship between Perceived Parenting Styles and Levels of Depression, Anxiety, and Frustration Tolerance in Female Students

Tazvin Ijaz and Zahid Mahmood
Government College University, Lahore

This study investigates the relationship between perceived parenting styles and presence of Depression, Anxiety, and Level of Frustration Tolerance (LFT) in female students. "Perceived Parenting Style" Scale was developed and administered on 232 female students along with three scales (Depression, Anxiety and LFT) of Symptom Checklist-R (Rahman, Jagir, Dawood, Mansoor, & Rehman, 2000). Results showed a weak positive relationship between parental authoritarianism and Depression and Anxiety but a strong relationship with LFT. In addition to maternal authoritarianism, mothers were also perceived as "controlling" and this "control" was found to have no relationship with Depression, Anxiety and LFT. Moreover, results indicate a moderately significant relationship between paternal permissiveness and depression, anxiety and LFT. No such relationship was found in case of maternal permissiveness. These findings are discussed with reference to cultural differences in perception of parenting styles.

Keywords: Authoritarian parenting, permissive parenting, depression, anxiety, level of frustration tolerance

Parenting and its impact on child's development has long been a topic of interest for developmental psychologists. Parenting is a complex activity that involves bringing up the child from birth to adulthood. Parents are responsible for taking care of the child's biological as well as emotional needs. They are supposed to provide nourishment, safety, love and support to the child. Parents play a significant role in the physical and emotional development of the child. If this role is not fulfilled it may lead to gaps in child's personality and development.

Tazvin Ijaz and Zahid Mahmood, Department of Clinical Psychology, Government College University, Lahore.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Tazvin Ijaz, Department of Clinical Psychology, Government College University, Katchery Road, Lahore. E-mail: tazvin_ijaz@yahoo.com

Parenting style is determined by the way the parents respond to the child's needs and demands, the way they discipline the child and their impact on child's later development. The most influential work on parenting styles was done by Baumrind in 1980 (Shaimberg, 1988). She identified three distinct parenting styles i.e., permissive, authoritarian and authoritative. Authoritarian parents were described as strict and harsh and focused on gaining child's obedience to parental demands rather than responding to the child's demands. Permissive parents impose few restrictions, rules or limits on their children's behavior and authoritative parents were described as flexible and responsive to the child's needs but still enforcing reasonable standards of conduct. Baumrind's work revealed that both authoritarian and permissive parenting style had a negative impact on child's personality while authoritative parenting had a positive impact.

Many researches, focusing on the consequences of authoritarian parenting found that it leads to aggressive behaviors and externalizing and internalizing disorders. Harsh parental practices have often been associated with delinquent behaviors. Similarly permissive parenting was found to be associated with delinquency, emotional problems, misconduct, and alcohol abuse (Farrington, 1995; Hart, Dewolf, Wozniak, & Burts, 1992; Rubin, Stewart, & Chen, 1994; Wasserman, Miller, Pinner, & Jaramillo, 1996).

A number of empirical studies have shown that parenting experiences are highly correlated with different psychopathologies and psychological problems. Depression has been a prevalent psychological disorder and there has been theoretical and empirical evidence supporting the role of parent child interaction and depressive disorders. Bowlby (1980) postulated that adult depression is the result of inability to form secure attachment in childhood with the parents.

Similarly, Beck (1967) theorized that negative schemata that is a hallmark feature of depression is developed in response to critical and disapproved parenting. A number of researchers have found that depressed patients describe their parents as more rejecting and more over protective and less warm (Crook, Raskin, & Eliot, 1981; Gerlsma, Das, & Emmelkamp, 1993; Perris, et al., 1986).

Forehand and Nousiainen (1993) observed that "autocratic non accepting mothering" is associated with acting out behaviors. Rey and Plapp (1990) studied juveniles with conduct problems and found that such adolescents perceived their parents as more overprotective and less caring. Other parenting practices that have been found to be contributing to delinquent behaviors include apart from childhood abuse and neglect, parental aggressiveness and conflict, poor parental

supervision and, harsh discipline (Kelso & Stuart, 1986; McCord, 1983; Widom, 1989).

It has also been observed that the lack of maternal affection, strict and harsh disciplinary practices, and poor care from the father is related to suicidal ideation in adolescents and young adults (Wagner, & Cohen, 1994). Kerver, Van Son, and Groot (1992) emphasized the role of paternal and maternal deprivation in somatization disorder. Benjamin and Benjamin (1992) reported a possible relationship between dissociative disorders and certain family factors. The critical family factors included exploitation of children by the parents and unresponsive, neglectful parents.

In Western literature (Burts, 1992; Farrington, 1995; Hart et al.,; Rubin et al., 1994; Wasserman et al., 1996) maladaptive parenting styles i.e., authoritarian and permissive parenting has been generally associated with problematic outcomes in children. The impact of such parenting spans from adjustment and social issues to pathologies like depression, anxiety and low frustration tolerance.

Parenting is universal but parenting behaviors vary from culture to culture. A parent's way of expressing love, care, affection, and control may be different across cultures. With this difference of expression, the child's perception may also vary. In the Western culture a parent's attempt to monitor the child may be considered as breach of autonomy while in Asian culture such monitoring might be viewed as a sign of parental concern. While exploring this difference of perception Nelson, Hart, Yang, Olsen, and Jin (2006) supported the assertion made by Chao in 1994 that the concepts of authoritarianism may have a different meaning for Western and Asian cultures. It may be perceived as interfering and restrictive by a Western child but for the Asians it may be perceived more as a sign of love, care and deep concern.

In this regard Rohner and Pettengill (1985) found that in Korea the normal parental role is expressed by the phrase "strict father, benevolent mother". Fathers are expected to be more strict and task oriented while mothers are more intimate and emotionally close to the children. Similar picture was obtained in the Japanese society where family interdependence is strongly emphasized in defining social role of children (Azuma, Kashiwagi, & Hess, 1981). Wolf (1972) found that Taiwanese families generally believe that if the child is to be trained properly, he/she must be afraid of the parents and the only way to strengthen positive behavior is to severely punish bad behavior. Similar impact of culture has also been mentioned by Carter and

Middlemeiss (1992) and Dosanjh and Ghuman (1998) in Asian families living in Britain.

In addition to Asian cultures, it has been observed in Islamic countries that girls are more closely supervised from early adolescence till they get married following the strong concept of "honor". It has also been observed that in such cultures parents are more likely to use harsh parenting styles to discipline their children (Stewart, Bond, Abdullah, & Ma, 2000; Synovitz, 2008).

Parenting in Pakistani Culture. Pakistan is a country based on Islamic Ideology. In addition to cultural and social factors, religion has also been found to be affecting parenting practices. Islamic teachings emphasize on respecting parents as they are considered to be "second only to God" (Obeid, 1988). Keeping this in mind parents cultivate obedience, respect, and submission to authority in their children. The sense of duty to family and conformity to communal values and harmony are considered to be desirable and valued characteristics of "good" children.

In this respect, Stewart et al., (1999) have explained that girls in Pakistan are taught from the very beginning to obey and follow their mothers and boys were taught to follow their fathers. This trend of training makes the child more likely to obey parents and perceived their authoritarianism as sign of involvement which is contrary to Western perception.

Under such teachings and value system, parental authoritarian control and supervision seem to be more normal and accepted in Pakistan as compared to Western cultures. Stewart, Zaman, and Dar (2006) studied the construct of autonomy or independence as perceived by mothers in Pakistan. Most of the mothers reported that females have more restrictions in our culture and they are less likely to be autonomous than males. It was also reported that females in Pakistan culture are trained in a way that their own needs and choices are of secondary importance and more emphasis is given to looking after the family needs and in-laws.

Literature has indicated that authoritarian and permissive parenting have been associated with negative child outcomes in the West but in Asian cultures such a relationship has not been observed frequently. The impact of these two parenting styles using an indigenous tool has not been explored in Pakistan so the present study was designed to explore how the two parenting styles were associated with Depression, Anxiety and LFT in female students. Because of the difference between Western and Asian practices the tools developed in

the West may not accurately assess the child rearing practices in Asian cultures. To meet this requirement, current study also attempted to initiate development of an indigenous tool to identify perception of parenting in Pakistan. Such an indigenous tool will also be helpful in studying the perception of parenting practices in a culture like Pakistan where religious, social and cultural factors have been found to be very influential (Rohner, & Rohner, 1978; Stewart, Zaman, & Dar, 2006).

Method

In the light of current literature, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

- 1 Parental authoritarianism will have a significant positive relationship with Anxiety, Depression and LFT.
- 2 Parental permissiveness will have a significant positive relationship with Anxiety, Depression and LFT.

Sample

The sample of 232 females was collected from 5 different colleges and universities through convenient sampling. Inclusion criteria was bilingual female university students with both parents alive and living together. Data was collected in group settings. Age range was 19 to 27 years and mean age was 21.41 with *SD* of 1.45. Only females were selected as they have been found to be affected more by parental attitude than males (Diaz, 2005). From the sample of 232 only 5 were married. 74.60 % were living in nuclear family system. 23.30 % were the eldest ones in the sample while 26.70% were the youngest.

Instruments

Development of Perceived Parenting Style Scale (PPSS). In order to identify indigenous attributes of parenting styles, a sample of 19 female post masters trainee clinical psychologists were asked to write down attributes of both authoritarian parents and permissive parents.

The list of attributes obtained was reviewed and repeated items were eliminated. After review, the list comprised of 21 items, 11 items measuring authoritarian and 10 items measuring permissive parenting style.

To establish the construct validity of the items, the list of 21 attributes was given to 9 clinical psychologists with at least 5 years of professional experience. They were asked to judge the extent to which each attribute was indicative of Authoritarian or Permissive parenting style on a 5-point scale (where 0 stands for "not at all indicative" and 4 stands for "very much indicative"). All attributes receiving more than 50% scores on one parenting style or the other by the experts were included in the Perceived Parenting Style Scale (PPSS). Final scale required respondents to score each attribute on a 7-point scale (where 0 stands for "never" and 6 stands for "always"). Higher the score on the two dimensions greater permissiveness and/or authoritarianism is predicted.

Demographic Questionnaire. A demographic questionnaire was developed on the basis of literature review encompassing all those variables that have been found to be related to perceived parenting styles. It includes age, number of siblings, birth order, marital status, family system, father's and mother's education and occupation.

Symptom Checklist Revised (SCL-R). In an attempt to study the relationship of the perceived parenting style and the presence of Anxiety, Depression and LFT, three scales of SCL-R (Rahman, Jagir, Dawood, Mansoor, & Rehman, 2000) were used. SCL-R was standardized on clinical and non clinical population. It consists of six different subscales; Anxiety, Depression, LFT, Schizophrenia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Somatoform. These scales were validated against already developed scales including State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI), Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), LFT Inventory, Positive and Negative Symptoms Scales (PANSS), Padua Inventory, and Crown Crisp Experimental Index (CCEI). The correlations found for Depression scale was 0.73, for somatoform scales 0.73, for anxiety scale 0.47, for OCD 0.21, for schizophrenia 0.34 and 0.68 for LFT scale. Each scale records responses on a 4-point scale where 0 stands for "not at all" and 3 stands for "most of the time". Concurrent validity of each scale was reported. Depression scale has 24 items, Anxiety scale 29 items and LFT has 24 items.

Procedure

The PPSS along with SCL-R and Demographic questionnaire were administered on 232 female university students. After getting permission from the authorities of the universities, the subjects who fulfilled the inclusion criteria and who gave their consent to participate in the study were told about the purpose of the study. They were also reassured that all the information they will provide will be kept confidential and will be used only for research purposes. After distributing the questionnaire, the subjects were given detailed instructions about the questionnaires and the rating scales. Subjects were asked to rate their both parents separately on a 7-point scale of PPSS forms both for Father and Mother. After the administration of the questionnaire, subjects were encouraged to ask any question regarding the research project or their concerns.

Results

An exploratory factor analysis was carried out separately for Father and Mother using Varimax rotation which yielded two factors for father and three factors for mother respectively. The solution was obtained by using the criterion of Eigen value equal to or greater than 1. Factor loading of .40 and above was used as a criteria for inclusion in single factor.

Table 1

Factor Loadings on Father and Mother Scales of PPSS

Items	Father		Mother		Control factor
	Authoritarian Factor	Permissive factor	Authoritarian factor	Permissive factor	
1. Self centered	-	-	-	-	.420
2. Make all Decisions	.467	-	-	-	.789
3. Stick to rules	.593	-	-	-	.486
4. Dominating	.633	-	-	-	.744
5. Abusive	.505	-	.640	-	-
6. Rigid	.479	-	.598	-	-
7. Rejecting	.605	-	.704	-	-

Continued...

8. Critical	.680	-	.720	-	-
9. Demanding	.572	-	.605	-	-
10. Strict	.807	-	.448	-	-
11. Too lenient	-	.490	-	-	-
12. Allow free Expression	-	.645	-	.551	-
13. Affectionate	-	.759	-	.705	-
14. Encouraging	-	.712	-	.491	-
15. Generous	-	.651	-	.555	-
16. Be caring	-	.755	-	.680	-
17. Forgiving	-	.488	-	.463	-
18. Avoid responsibility	-	-	-	.689	-
Eigen value	6.24	2.52	4.71	2.23	1.76
% of Variance	29.74	12.03	22.44	10.65	8.40

Out of 21 items in original scale, 18 converged into 2 factors for Father i.e., Authoritarian and Permissive and 3 factors for Mother i.e., Authoritarian, Permissive and Control.

The reliability of the scale was established by calculating alpha co-efficient for all factors separately.

Table 2

Alpha Co-efficient of the Factors of PPSS for both Father and Mother Versions (N = 232)

		No. of items	Alpha Coefficients
Father			
	Authoritarian	9	.81
	Permissive	7	.83
Mother			
	Authoritarian	6	.76
	Permissive	7	.76
	Control	4	.62

Table 2 shows quite high values of alpha co-efficient for both Father and Mother. These values indicate relatively high internal consistency of the factors and establish the reliability of the scale.

Each hypothesis was tested separately for Father and Mother.

Hypotheses 1 and 2

Parental Authoritarianism will have a significant positive relationship with Depression, Anxiety, and LFT.

Parental permissiveness will have a significant positive relationship with Depression and LFT.

To test these hypotheses Pearson Product Moment Correlations were carried out.

Table 3

Correlations between PPSS Factors and Depression, Anxiety and LFT (N=232)

		Depression	Anxiety	LFT
Father				
	Authoritarian	.26**	.24*	.24*
	Permissive	-.24*	-.22*	-.20*
Mother				
	Authoritarian	.2*	.18	.78***
	Permissive	-.12	-.12	-.08
	Control	.01	.04	.03

df = 230. *p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001

Table 3 shows that paternal and maternal authoritarianism have a significant but weak relationship with Depression but a high correlation was obtained between maternal authoritarianism and LFT contrary to paternal authoritarianism. These results reveal that paternal authoritarianism which in the western culture has been found to be strongly and repetitively associated with Depression, Anxiety and LFT, may not be perceived as much negatively in our culture (Farrington, 1995; Hart, et al, 1992; Rubin, et al., 1994; Wasserman, et al., 1996). But the high correlation between maternal authoritarianism and LFT indicates that authoritarian mothers are perceived as more disturbing by females.

Table 3 also shows that there is a weak but significant negative relationship between permissive father and Depression, Anxiety and LFT. On the other hand, there is no relationship between maternal permissiveness and Depression, Anxiety and LFT. These results are again contrary to western conception where permissiveness has been

associated with high depression and low LFT for both mother and father (Crook, Raskin, & Eliot, 1981; Gerlsma, Das, & Emmelkamp, 1993; Gonzalez, Greenwood & Wenhsu, 2001; Perris, et al., 1986).

Table 3 has also shown correlation of maternal control with Depression, Anxiety and LFT. Quite surprisingly maternal control, which in the Western culture has a negative connotation (Forehand, & Nousiainen, 1993; Nelson, et al., 2006; Swanson, 1950), has been found to have no relationship with Depression, Anxiety and LFT. These results indicated that firstly females perceive this control as more positive and constructive, as indicated by previous findings in Asian and Islamic cultures (Ijaz, 2004; Stewart, Bond, Abdullah, & Ma, 2000; Synovitz, 2008).

Table 4

Regression Analysis of Paternal and Maternal Authoritarianism, Permissiveness, Control and Depression, Anxiety and LFT (N=232)

Variables	B	SEB	B	t	p
Father Authoritarianism					
Depression	.33	.07	.26	4.16	.00
Anxiety	.44	.07	.26	4.16	.00
LFT	.32	.08	.24	3.22	.00
Mother Authoritarianism					
Depression	.40	.12	.21	3.33	.00
Anxiety	.49	.17	.18	2.84	.00
LFT	.35	.12	.17	2.75	.00
Father Permissiveness					
Depression	-.40	.10	-.24	-3.79	.00
Anxiety	-.55	.15	-2.28	-3.54	.00
LFT	-.37	.11	-2.07	-3.20	.00
Mother Permissiveness					
Depression	-.34	.18	-.12	-1.8	.06
Anxiety	-.48	.26	-.12	-1.8	.06
LFT	-.25	.19	-.08	-1.3	.19
Mother Control					
Depression	.04	.16	.01	.27	.78
Anxiety	.16	.24	.04	.69	.48
LFT	.08	.17	.03	.47	.63

Regression analysis was also carried out to explore the predictability of Depression, Anxiety, and LFT from parental Authoritarianism, Permissiveness and Control. The analysis has

shown that Paternal Authoritarianism was a strong predictor ($p < .0001$) of increased levels of Depression, Anxiety and LFT with R values of 0.26, 0.24 and 0.24 and R^2 values of 0.70, 0.06 and 0.06 respectively. Similarly, Maternal Authoritarianism was also a strong predictor ($p < .0001$) of Depression, Anxiety and LFT with R values of .21, .18 and .17 and R^2 values of .04, .03 and .03 respectively. Paternal permissiveness was also found to be strong ($p < .001$) indicator of lower levels of Depression, Anxiety and LFT but on the other hand, Maternal Permissiveness and Control were not strong predictors ($p > .05$) of Depression, Anxiety and LFT.

Discussion

This study investigates the relationship between perceived parenting style and the presence of Depression, Anxiety, and LFT in female students. The study was based on Baumrind's typology of parenting styles. Originally Baumrind gave three parenting styles i.e., Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive but researches have shown that the two parenting styles (authoritarian and permissive) are more likely to have a negative impact on child's mental health (Farrington, 1995; Hart et al., 1992; Rubin et al., 1994; Wasserman et al., 1996). So for this reason the focus of present study was on these two parenting styles. Western culture is more individualistic where personal rights and autonomy are cherished. Children are trained to be independent and self-sufficient and any kind of restrictions or control is perceived as an attack on the independence of the child. On the other hand, Asian cultures are more collectivistic and conformity to group values e.g., family and community are given precedence over individual's needs. Children are trained to obey and by and large follow their parent's footsteps. Studies carried out in different Asian cultures like China, Taiwan and Korea have also shown that control and strictness are not perceived as damaging as predicted by the Western literature. Rather it has been observed that parental influence and control is perceived as sign of love, care and concern (Dosanjh & Ghuman, 1998; Rohner, & Pettengill, 1985). Islamic culture also emphasizes the need to inculcate obedience in their children and it has been observed that in Islamic countries authoritarian styles is not associated with psychological problems (Dwairy, 2004).

To explore the impact of parenting, a scale comprising of indigenous attributes of the two parenting styles (PPSS) was developed and given to 232 post graduate females. Factor analysis revealed two factors for the Father as expected i.e., Authoritarian and

Permissive but for Mother, three factors emerged including Authoritarian, Permissive, and Control. The attributes making 'control factor' were found to be the part of authoritarian factor for father but interestingly when it comes to mothers this control and domination is perceived as a separate aspect of parenting. In Baumrind's typology control aspect comes under the umbrella of authoritarian parenting and in many Western researches it has got a negative connotation. But as far as Asian cultures are concerned, authoritarian parenting is not perceived that much negative as observed by Rohner and Rohner (1978) in their study on American school children.

It has been observed in a number of studies that in Asian cultures some degree of control and strictness is perceived as a sign of parental love, concern, and involvement (Lau, & Cheung, 1987). Chao's (1994) work emphasized the difference between Asian and Western conception of parenting. She highlighted that Chinese parenting is guided by the concepts of "*chiao shun* ('teaching'), and *guan* (a term meaning both to love and to govern)". She claimed that "strictness" interpreted as hostility and interference by the Western child "may be equated with parental concern, care and involvement" by the Chinese child. In order to train the children and to monitor their activities, Asian mothers do exercise a degree of control and it is particularly emphasized in case of daughters (Stewart, et al., 1999).

Similarly, like other Islamic countries, in Pakistan parents are considered to be totally responsible for their children's training and upbringing. This duty of supervision and training is prescribed to the mothers not only by the social norms but also by the religious teachings. Daughters in Pakistani culture are programmed from the very beginning to be controlled. They are expected to look to their parents for important decisions of their lives. So in a culture where obedience is valued, tolerance for control and domination is more likely to be greater (Dwairy, 2004) as indicated by the results of current study.

Correlational and Regression analysis showed identical results and indicated that there is a weak but significant positive relationship between parental authoritarianism and Depression, Anxiety, and LFT but the relationship is not very strong as it was found in the West. It supports that fact that there are cultural differences in perception of parenting and its impact on mental health.

The present study has also shown that there is a weak negative relationship between paternal permissiveness and Depression, Anxiety and LFT. Similarly non-significant but negative correlation was observed in case of maternal permissiveness and Depression, Anxiety,

and LFT. These results contradict the previous findings that permissiveness also contributes to emotional problems. The reason could be that items encompassing permissive factor are more tilted towards love and warmth dimensions and not including the negative aspect of permissiveness like ignoring misbehaviors, failure to follow through and lack of confidence as indicated by Someya, Uehara, Kadowaki, Tang, & Takahashi, (2000).

Finally, the findings of this research have indicated that Authoritarian and Permissive parenting style which according to the Western view lead to psychopathology but they may not necessarily lead to negative outcomes when observed in Asian cultures. These findings emphasize that concepts of authoritarian and permissive parenting vary across cultures and when it comes to apply findings about such concepts one should be very cautious due to cultural variations.

Limitations and Suggestion

The tool was developed in the English language which limited its utility to only bilingual female population. The research was focused on authoritarian and permissive dimensions of parenting while leaving out authoritative parenting style.

It has been observed that in every culture different parental practices prevail for both genders (Dion, 1972; Hart, et al., 1992; Lytton & Romney, 1991). A similar kind of study on male population would be helpful to explore their perception of parenting in our culture. Similarly, perception of females of different age groups may also add some new information regarding parenting styles in our culture.

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